3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

762 of the girl, and her constant absence made him so miserable
577 that he ended his life.
578

A situation where the roles of the characters were reversed, and it was the mother who wished to visit the daughter's house, led to an even more pathetic tragedy.

In November 1939, a mother at Killepal was rebuked by her son and daughter-in-law for not helping them with the reaping of the kosra crop. She had been a widow for ten years and seems to have got a certain amount of pleasure and relaxation from paying visits to her married daughter at Dilmilli. This was resented by the son and brother with whom she lived. When she found that she was to be robbed even of this happiness, she killed herself.

VII

PARENTS-IN-LAW

674 The relationship between a man and his parents-in-law is
606 always difficult. But the general tradition in Maria, as in Hindu society, is that the older people should treat a son-in-law with respect and consideration. Neglect of this rule is apt to arouse very strong feelings in a man's mind. Marvi Kesa had three wives, the youngest of whom ran away to her parents' house after a beating. This is a common practice of aboriginal wives, and causes great annoyance to their husbands especially if the parents take their daughters' side. On this occasion Kesa followed his wife to the house and found her enjoying a drink of rice-beer with the neighbours. He went to his father-in-law and asked him why he had not sent his wife back. The older man replied casually that she had only arrived that morning, and this answer so annoyed Kesa that he struck him on the head with his axe and killed him.

In another case it was the mother-in-law who was the victim. Marvi Hinga took his wife Hirme, who was suffering from fever, to a neighbouring village to a Siraha for treatment. He stayed with her during the night and the next morning returned to his house, where he was seen by his mother-in-law. She, thinking that he had left her daughter uncared for and was now wandering about the village seeking enjoyment, abused the youth saying that he

3: Elwin E-5 (1935-1942) 1943
AW32 Gond AW32
Bison Horn Maria

was an eater of excreta and urine, and that though he had married her daughter he did not take the least care of her. Hinga, who was apparently a very good husband, was so annoyed at receiving this insult from a woman who should have treated him with respect, especially as the words were shouted at him in the hearing of the village from a distance of about twentyfive paces, that he rushed at her and battered her to death with his axe.

The relationship between a son-in-law and the father of a wife who had betrayed him, was at the bottom of the Aranpur murder of 1941. In 1937 Barse Chewa kept Bandi, daughter of Tati Pandu, a Maria blacksmith, as his wife. For the bride-price he paid a cow with a calf and a basketful of rice. About a year later Chewa's house caught fire, and his elder brother who was then living with them lodged a complaint with the police that Bandi herself had set fire to the building. She was prosecuted, but acquitted. After the disposal of the case against her, Chewa sent the girl back to her parents, and some time afterwards she married a man at Kondasauli. Chewa now went to his original father-in-law Pandu, and demanded a refund of the expense he had incurred in marrying his daughter. Pandu refused to pay anything on the ground that Chewa had turned her out of his house, and that he himself had had to maintain her for two years. He further claimed that any money that could be extracted from the new husband must come to him and not to Chewa. The quarrel went on for some time until at last Chewa grew so exasperated that he went at night to Pandu's house and shot him in the stomach. All Chewa's attempts to exonerate himself and implicate other people were frustrated by the fact that when the blacksmith removed the arrow from his stomach, he was able to recognize it as one which he himself had made for Chewa in his own smithy.

In this case tribal opinion was divided about the question in dispute. The normal rule is that if a woman leaves a husband for another man, he must repay the bride-price (possibly with certain reductions) to the original husband, and that the father of the girl is only entitled to receive money or goods from the first husband and not from his successors. But in this case the question was complicated